

*Papers from the Historical Seminary
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VI

THE EAST-INDIA TRADE OF PROVIDENCE

FROM 1787 TO 1807

BY

GERTRUDE SELWYN KIMBALL

PROVIDENCE, R. I.

PRESTON AND ROUNDS

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THE EAST INDIA TRADE OF PROVIDENCE,

FROM 1787 TO 1807.

The East India trade of Providence illustrates for us one of the largest fields of early New England activity. It is, of course, perfectly well known that before the development of manufactures had taken place, in the early years of the present century, commerce played a prominent part in the industrial life of all the Northern coast states. But it is, perhaps, worth while to call attention to the fact that the development of the particular line of commerce under consideration occurred precisely at a time when social and political conditions may plausibly be said to have impelled men in the direction of that which partook of mysterious adventure. Let us glance for a moment at those conditions, in 1787. The colonial merchant marine had played an important part in the war for independence as a privateering force, and that on a scale of considerable magnitude. Those years of predatory warfare must have brought out a spirit of daring, to which the idea of the unknown lands and the boundless treasures of the East would appeal as a direct incentive to action. Moreover, the English policy of trade restriction, which had been a peculiarly exasperating grievance to the New England and Middle colonies, no longer barred the way to the expansion of American commerce. The Revolution had shaken men out of the old routine channels of colonial industry and had aroused a spirit of progress, which, when independence was finally secured, forced men to push westward into the wilderness and eastward beyond the Atlantic. It can hardly be owing to a mere coincidence that the first ship cleared for the East Indies from Salem in 1785,* and the first from Providence in 1787.

* Hunt's Merch. Mag., vol. 36, p. 165.

Again, notwithstanding the fact that colonial trade had been practically confined to England and her dependencies, India had long been present to the American mind as a source of immense wealth. As early as 1698 the Earl of Bellomont, Governor of New York, wrote to the Lords of Trade and Plantations: "I find that those Pyrates that have given the greatest disturbance in the East Indies and Red Sea, have either been fitted from New York or Rhode Island, and manned from New York."* The gains thus secured were enormous, while the lack of concerted and uniform action on the part of the colonial governments made the risks of capture comparatively slight. These marauders were the forerunners of a more legitimate and respectable type of adventurers who began their operations just about a century later (1787), and who pushed the business with much enterprise during the next fifty years.

The first ship cleared from Providence for the East Indies in 1787—the last in 1841.† The materials for this study of the first twenty years of the East India trade have been obtained mainly from newspapers of those years and from the MSS. in the Moses Brown Papers, both in the possession of the Rhode Island Historical Society. Much valuable material was found among the old ships' papers of the firm of Brown and Ives; Mr. Sidney S. Rider, of Providence, has kindly furnished several MSS.; and use has been made of the custom-house records for the years under consideration.

It will be interesting to follow the fortunes of the first ship—the *General Washington*—sent from Providence to the East Indies, and it fortunately happens that much material relating to her is available—surprisingly available when the fact is taken into consideration that the bulk of the business-papers belonging to the firm who owned the vessel were destroyed by fire, and that, therefore, such information as exists regarding this pioneer ship has come from outside sources.

In the *Providence Gazette* for December 22, 1787, we find this item: "The Ship *General Washington*, Captain Johnathan Donnison of this Port, bound for the East Indies, fell down the River on Wednesday. Her Cargo will be completed in a few Days, when she will go to Sea. Colonel Samuel Ward goes Supercargo." The *United States Chronicle* for January 3, 1788,

* N. Y. Col. Docs., Vol. IV., p. 306.

† The *Panther*, for Batavia.

devotes a few words to the character of the enterprise :
 “The Ship *General Washington*, Captain Donnison, of this Port, left our River on Wednesday Evening, last Week, with a fair Wind, bound to the East Indies. As this is the first Vessel which ever sailed from this Place to that distant Quarter of the Globe, we wish the Adventurers every Success.” “The Good Ship *General Washington*” was built for the firm of Brown and Francis, prominent merchants of Providence. The senior partner—John Brown—figures largely in the local history and development of the town. He was frequently a member of the Rhode Island Assembly, and was Representative for Rhode Island in the Federal Congress from 1799 to 1801. He built the first wharves and store-houses at India Point, and was instrumental in establishing the first bank in the state. In politics Mr. Brown was an ardent Federalist. As a citizen he was a man of noteworthy public spirit, and throughout the newspapers of the time there are constant allusions to him and his brothers, who occupied positions of importance in the affairs of the town, and were always interested and active in promoting anything in the way of public improvement ; new bridges, new roads, new wharves, the introduction of new industries, and the promotion of manufactures are specific instances in which the community was largely indebted to their enterprise and sagacity. It is in the Moses Brown Papers that the following letter is found—the first indication of the East India trade which, within the next few years, brought more than one fortune into Rhode Island.

“Providence, August 18, 1787.

“Brother Moses not knowing wheather I may see you before I go to the Assembly, next Monday, I take this method to inform you that I have it in contemplation to Fit the Ship *Genl Washington* to the East Indies in which Case shall not be any more concerned in the Ginney Trade. Thier is a Man by the name of Hayley An Englishman that has lived 7 Years in India and gives Good Encouragement to send the Ship, he will go in her, he has Lately Married in this Country, and appears to be an Intelligable Handed Man. if she goes she ought to carry a Cargo from £10000 to £12000 L.M. value, in Cannon, Shot, Anchors, Barr Iron, Tarr, Ginseng, Medearia Wine, Brandy and Sperits, Jamaica Sperits ; Mr. Hayley Ses, but New England Rum made very strong I should think may answer as by the

time it gets there will be about as good. For such a Cargo carried to the Hither Indies, and to take a Freight from there to China she may bring a Cargo home worth £40000. The Wine to the amount of $\frac{1}{3}$ the Cargo to be taken on board at Madeira, on the outward Passag. It may be mostly had on 6 and 12 Months' Credit, with 8 or 10000 Dollars Cash. the Ginseng and other parts of the Cargo, besides what may be procured in our Way may be purchased. *Will you be Concerned.* If you think proper and can make it convenient shall be glad to see you on Monday morning next as early as convenient.

Yrs &c—

JOHN BROWN."

Whether "Brother Moses" invested or not we are not told, but "Brother John" went on with his preparations. The *Gazette* for September 22, 1787, has this advertisement:

"Wanted by Brown and Francis for the East Indian market, a quantity of good ginseng, for which a good price will be given, according to the quality. They expect to continue purchasing until about the 20th of November next."

In December, 1787, the *General Washington* cleared for the East Indies. In the following April news of her safe arrival at Madeira reached Providence, and in the April of 1789 it was learned that she had reached Madras in safety in the August of 1788. Finally, in the *United States Chronicle* of July 9, 1789, we find the following bit of news:

"On Sunday last arrived here from the East Indies, the Ship *General Washington*, Captain Jonathan Donnison, with a valuable cargo of the Productions and Manufactures of that Quarter of the Globe. The *General Washington* was fitted from the Port [of Providence] in December, 1787, and made her voyage out and Home, in 19 months and a few Days, having been at the following Ports, —Madeira, Madras, Pondicherry, Canton, St. Helena, St. Ascension, and St. Eustatia;—and what is very remarkable has brought Home, in good Health, every Person she carried out, except a Black Boy, who was by Accident lost overboard. In the *General Washington* came Samuel Shaw Esq. Consul for the United States at the Port of Canton, etc."

Further details respecting this first voyage of the *General Washington* were found in a manuscript journal, which was among the ship-papers of the firm of Brown and Ives, and which bears this inscription: "Journal on board the Ship Gen-

eral Washington. Henry Smith's Book. March 8th, 1788." The record begins in this way : "Journal of a Passage from the Island Madara towards the Cape of Good Hope on the good Ship *General Washington*, Johnathan Donnison master. Kept by Henry Smith. God grant the Ship may have a quick Voyage and reach her desired Port in safety." Then come the daily items :

"Mch. 8. thick cloudy weather.

"Mch. 9. Strong gales and large Seas from the westward.

"Mch. 12. Fair weather—which God send a continuance of.

"Mch. 13. Fine Weather, pleasant Breezes, and a Smooth Sea. Those who never cross'd the Tropic of Cancer are made acquainted with it by being shaved and Duck'd and paying their Bottle—the invariable Custom practised by Sailors.

"Mch. 16. This Day being Sunday all hands employed washing and mending their Cloaths and so ends the day.

"March 30, Sunday. At 6 a.m. killed a fine Hog, which serves all hands for a fresh dinner, likewise caught a large Shark, people employed boiling, frying, and Stewing Hog and Shark. This being Sunday I wish the prayers of Jemmy Manning* or somebody else would send us a good fair Breeze."

Towards the middle of May the writer records heavy gales off the Coromandel coast. By July 8 the *General Washington* was off Ceylon. On July 18 she anchored off Pondicherry. On July 22 this record is made : "H. Smith and Wm. Page and 6 men set off in the Yawl for Madras to inquire the markets &c and returned the 27th July at 3 o'clock P.M. At 6 o'clock weighed anchor and sailed for Madras.

"July 28.—Att 5 P M Madras discovered W.N.W. distance 2 leagues. saw the colours flying at the Fort—at one o'clock Saw the Shipping in Madras.

"August 24, 1788. Sailed from Madras for Canton In China, through the Straits of Malacca.

"Oct. 4, 1788. This Day Frank Malbone (Negro) unfortunately fell overboard and was drowned.

"Oct. 22. Went Ashore at Maccao for refreshments and Pilot. Maccao, a Portuguese Place, is the residence of the different European Supercargoes when the Business is done at Canton.

* James Manning, pastor of the First Baptist Church, and first President of Rhode Island College (Brown University).

their Houses are very good Buildings and the only ones in Maccao.

“29 Jan’y, 1789—took our Departure from Maccao.

“Feb’y 18—Anchored under the Island Crocata* at which place found 3 English Indiamen. Also Ship *Jay* American, bound from Batavia to Bombay with Sugar Candy.

“Apr. 29. Came to anchor under the Island St. Helena, three English, two Swedish, and two Ships under Imperial Colours in the Rhodestead refreshments plenty, treated with great Politeness, a healthy, pretty little place. Heard of the illness of George III and the war in Europe.

“June 7—Anchored at St. Eustatia.

“June 17—weighed Anchor and set Sail for Rhode Island.

“July 4th—Spoke a Ship below Newport. Distance sailed in the Ship *Genl Washington* in her Voyage from Providence to the East Indies and Canton and back, as run by Log . . . 32758 miles.”

The Henry Smith from whose “Journal” the above-quoted items were taken was afterward (1805–6) acting governor of the State. He built the Duncan house on Smith’s Hill, which was named for him. His position on board the ship seems to have been that of a passenger, or he may possibly have been a private adventurer in the Indian market. This last conjecture derives some plausibility from a manuscript in the possession of Mr. Rider which is marked: “Bill of a transaction between Capt. Donnison, Scott Jenckes, and Henry Smith on board Ship *General Washington* 27 August, 1788.” These gentlemen bought Madeira wine to the amount of £19 2s. and paid for the same in rice, shoes, candles, and ware (iron, probably). There are also extant several letters written by Henry Smith on this voyage, and an invoice of the cargo carried to India. One or two extracts from these letters may be interesting. The first is dated

“Canton, January 7th, 1789.”

“My dear Parents

“This goes by the Asia Capt. Barry of Philadelphia. Our business here will be despatched by the 25th Inst. at which time we shall sail but proposing to stop at the West Indies, this probably may reach you before us, having combated with rude Winds through the whole of our Voyage by being too late, the

* Krakatoa, lately famous for its calamitous earthquake.

Anxiety of which we had not only experienced, but suffered in the Sale of our Property. . . . Our passage from Madras was Tedious we were detained through the Straits of Malacca 26 days by calm and head winds, were overtaken by the N.E. Monsoon before we got in and even after we got in thot ourselves very fortunate to arrive here, having rode out a Gale of Wind with the loss of two Cables and anchors off Maccao. The enormous charges added to our small fund, makes our home Cargo very Small, we [shall] however freight Our Ship full, for which we only wait. Page, Jenckes and myself are well all the rest of us are in good Health and Spirits which are dampened only by reflecting on the immense distance that Seperates us from our dearest Connection, not entering into perticulars I content myself with informing you of our Situation, and shall expect (God willing) to be with you the latter end of July. My afft. love to my dear Brothers and Sisters and all other friends.

I remain Aff. Your Son and Friend

HENRY SMITH."

The second letter is also addressed to his parents ; from an allusion in it, one would infer that Henry Smith was a nephew of one of the owners of the ship. The letter reads :

"Ship *Genl Washington*,

[Superscription omitted].

"Feby 17th, 1789.

"We are now compleating our Wood and Water on the Island of Sumatra at the entrance of the Straits of Sunda, took our departure from Maccao on 29 Jany and arrived here the 14th [of February] and pleasingly congratulate ourselves on being so far towards our wished for destination my expectations in this voyage were never very great, as small as they were I shall (with the owners) find myself much disappointed—I however hope to convince them that I have ever had their Interest at heart and endeavored to act conformably to, as far as the *power* of my agreement would permit, which was nothing at all. My good Uncle I think will be convinced by experience not to give this power of conducting his Property in the hands of a *Soldier* again." (The reference is to Col. Samuel Ward, the supercargo). "having had trial with a number of Ships are pleased with our Ship's Sailing, and doubt not should the Winds prove propitious of having a quick passage. . . . I remain Aff.

Your Son and Friend—

H. S."

The invoice of the *General Washington's* cargo purports to be an "Invoice of Sundries the Cargo of the Ship *General Washington* to be sold on the Coast of Coromandel." The largest item consists of anchors (of various grades) to the value of £1315; then comes cordage, £1175; sail-cloth, £290; munitions of war (cannon, gun carriages and shot) of £513 value; bar iron to the amount of £430; £370 worth of sheet copper; a small amount of steel; a few spruce spars; a large and varied assortment of liquors, including rum valued at £780, brandy £695, Teneriffe wines to the amount of £700, claret, porter, cordials and cider; then a few hams, some chocolate, "44 boxes of the best Narragansett cheese," and an item of £430 in spermaceti candles. The total valuation of the goods invoiced amounts to £7904 7s., or (reckoning $16\frac{2}{3}$ cents to the shilling) \$26,348.

This record of the first voyage from Providence to India and the China Seas is completed by the manifest of the cargo brought back to Providence by the *General Washington* in the July of 1789. This manifest, which antedates the Federal administration of the customs revenue in Rhode Island, was found in the State Impost Book for 1788-1789, and is especially valuable because it is apparently the sole instance where a valuation of the entire cargo is given. From this manifest we learn that the *General Washington* brought to her owners a cargo valued at £29,951, or, reckoning $16\frac{2}{3}$ cents to the shilling, \$99,848. The principal item was 240,000 lbs. of tea, valued at from 7s. (\$1.17) to 1s. 6d. (25 cents). Silks, valued at \$14,000; china, \$1,800; cotton goods, \$3,650; lacquered ware, \$550; cloves and flannels, \$144 each, made up the remainder of the cargo.

Such was the first voyage of the first ship that left Providence for India, and it would seem on the face of it as if Henry Smith's predictions of her owners' disappointment were not fulfilled. Certain it is that they were not entirely disheartened by the results, for on December 26, 1789, the ship *Washington*, Capt. Donnison, sailed again for India, and from this time there is a steadily increasing number of such clearances. Records of several of these early Indiamen have been preserved, and their chronicles are attractive from the adventurer's as well as from the merchant's point of view.

First, however, let us follow the *General Washington* to the close of her career. Her second voyage was completed on June

11, 1791, and in October, Brown and Francis advertise in the *Gazette*, "Bohea Tea, in Quarter, Half, and Whole Chests; Sou-chong Tea, in Quarter and Half-Quarter Chests; Hyson and Hyson-Skin Ditto., in Quarter and Half-Quarter Chests—all fresh imported from China this Year, in the Ship *General Washington*, and superior to any Teas now in the Country." A long list of china-ware and dry-goods follows, and the terms of payment are specified. On January 7, 1792, the *General Washington* cleared for Bombay, and in the *Gazette* for May 18, 1793, we read: "Monday last arrived here the Ship *General Washington*, Captain Donnison, in 5 months from Canton, with a valuable cargo." For the next two years we lose sight of her, but on May 15, 1795, she cleared for Calcutta. Then comes another long gap in her annals, and the next item that appears in the *Gazette* bears the date of December 19, 1801, and reads: "The Ship *Washington*, Captain Cole, of this Port, was at Massafuero the 9th of August on her way to Canton." Nothing further is heard until June 26, 1802, when this item appears in the *Gazette*: "By the last western mail letters were received from the ship *Washington*, Captain Edward Cole, of this port, dated the 24th of October last, at Albemarle, one of the Gallapagos Ids. in the South Sea, where she had stopt for turtle, and was to sail the same evening or next morning for Canton, all well." On July 17, 1802, we find: "The Ship *General Washington*, Captain Cole, of this port, arrived at Canton the 16th of January last." Again, on August 7, 1802: "Sunday last arrived here and saluted the town the ship *Washington*, Captain Cole (late commanded by Captain Smith, deceased), after a passage of 134 days from Canton."

We know that the *General Washington* went on still another voyage, since news of her arrival at Cronstadt reached Providence in the October of 1803, and in December her arrival in Providence is chronicled. Once more, only, does the *General Washington* appear in the guise of an Indiaman, and that under quite different circumstances than heretofore. On the 3d of December, 1803, the following advertisement appeared in the *Gazette*:

"*Sales of valuable Russia Goods.* By order of the Executors of the Will of the Hon. John Brown Esquire, deceased, On Thursday 15th of December at the stores on India-Point, will be Sold, at public Auction (without Reserve) the entire Cargo of the Ship *General Washington*, William Smith, Master, from Russia, con-

sisting of 130 Tons of St Petersburg clean Hemp, 130 Tons of new Sable Iron, 25 Tons of old Sable Iron, 5 Tons of best assorted square Iron, 2 Tons of Sheet Iron, 100 Pieces of Ravenna Duck, 300 Bolts of best heavy Duck, 2 best Down Beds, &c., &c., etc., 5 or 6 Tons of Cordage, assorted, in Lots to suit Purchasers. Sales to begin at 9 o'Clock A.M. The Conditions will be Liberal.

“Also at 12 o'Clock on the same Day the Remarkably fine fast-sailing Ship *General Washington*, Burthen 360 Tons per Register, but will stow 600 Tons. She is coppered to her loaded Water-Line, has 2 Suits of Sails, is well found in every Respect, and could be put to Sea at very small Expense.

“Hezekiah Sabin, jun. Attorney to the Executors of John Brown Esquire. Providence, December 3, 1803.”

After the change of ownership had taken place the career of the *General Washington* was confined to the comparatively inglorious sphere of action of a coasting vessel. Her connection with the Indian trade is chiefly interesting because she was the first vessel to leave Providence for India and the China Seas, when this was an attempt of no little magnitude. Other Indianmen had far more adventurous and exciting experiences, and in this respect none equalled the *John Jay*. This vessel first appears upon the scene of action in a newspaper paragraph, constructed with due attention to the requirements of the occasion, —*Providence Gazette*, October 11, 1794 :

“Wednesday Morning last was launched a new, strong, and elegantly built Ship, Burthen 460 Tons, belonging to Messrs. Brown, Benson, and Ives.—The Name of *John Jay* was given her, in Honour of the Abilities and Patriotism of the distinguished Statesman, whose Appointment to his present important Embassy is so cordially approved by all who wish for the Peace and Prosperity of the United States.—The Workmanship displayed in constructing this Vessel, reflects high Credit on the Artist, Colonel Benjamin Tallman, in the opinion of those who are skilled in naval Architecture.” This introduction was speedily followed by an advertisement : “A Number of smart able-bodied *Seamen*, belonging to the Town of Providence and its Vicinity—also a few stout, young raw Hands, who are desirous of going to Sea—are invited to ship on board the new ship *John Jay*, bound for the East Indies. Apply to Brown, Benson and Ives.” On January 3, 1795, the following notice appeared

in the *Gazette* : “Sunday last [December 28, 1794] sailed for India the large and elegant new Ship *John Jay*, Captain Olney, owned by Brown, Benson, and Ives, of this Town — Captain Samuel Snow has gone in her as Supercargo.”

A large collection of the *John Jay's* papers has been preserved by the firm of Brown and Ives, and among them is the following letter, containing an account of her first voyage :

“Bombay, 27th June, 1795.

“Messrs. Brown, Benson and Ives,

“Gentlemen,

“Through the politeness of Mr. Adamson we are indulged with the privilege of conveying this small Scrip overland to your correspondents in London although we are happy in this opportunity yet [it] is with the most painful Sensations that we announce to you that on the 6th Inst. in Lat. 14.30 North longitude 69 East by the change of the Monsoon the severity of which we believe few years have equalled, we just escaped from Death. The size of our paper will only admit of telling you that after suffering more than it is possible to express in seeing our Spars, Sails rigging &c go one after another, that in about 12 hours we were left with only one Main and mizzenmast standing having lost our foremast, Bowsprit and every yard sail and spar, Except the forementioned, above deck, in this Situation we remained until next day when the gale so far abated as to enable us to rig a small Jury foremast, with which with the help of some small light sails we reached this port on Saturday evening the 13 Instant 7 Days after our disaster, our Arrival here in the opinion of most people was looked upon next to a Miracle, we had the extreme Satisfaction during the gale however and ever Since of finding the Ship perfectly tight, The Cargo had suffered some damage by breakage &c. Markets very bad. Three Americans here besides us, none of whom will nett the first cost by very considerable, no freight to be obtained, but great exertions by all to procure a load of Cotton, as but a little more than one half the quantity usual is at Market and no more expected. We secured ours next day after our Arrival so that we shall go full. The *America*, J. Sampson, will not get one half a Cargo, they arrived 5 days after us and have Offered 5 to ten Rupees [per] Candy more than we have given, but in Vain, as there is not a Cargo in the place; Our repairs &c here

will amount to an amazing Sum which in addition to bad markets will leave you but small prospects from this port, The War makes no alteration here, so that our expectations on that Account are frustrated. We sold Gin a. $10\frac{1}{4}$ Rupees Rum 1 Rupee and 1 anna—Sperm.^e candle 1 Rupee and Iron 19.5 Ru. pr. ton. Porter will not bring one half cost. Cordage Anchors &c no Sale.

“We wrote to Madras the Day after our arrival by a Ship from this port, directed to Capt. Rodman or Warnor; the Ship will be on such forwardness as expect to begin taking in Cotton next Week and are determined to sail if possible by 20th July. You will be sensible that five or six weeks must be very short to spar and rig a Ship and to transact our other business, not one Moment will be lost in action for of all things deliver us from another Monsoon. . . .

“Crew all well but Bowen, the agreeable news of the commercial treaty with England arrived here [a] few days since overland. The *Atlantic* from Philadelphia which sailed 20th Dec^m 94 arrived here three Weeks before us, which made some difference in our trade. Our passage here was 167 days. Inform Mrs. Snow and Olney we are well and hearty—And believe us—

Gent^m Yours &c

SAMPSON

DANL OLNEY”

This letter, which was written in a peculiarly minute hand and crowded upon an almost incredibly small bit of paper, was followed by another entering more fully into particulars, and giving extracts from the *John Jay's* log, describing the storm through which she had passed, and expatiating upon the state of the cotton market. An enclosed statement of the *Jay's* repairs makes them amount to £1695 16s.

There is material in the old ship-papers for the most ample details respecting this and subsequent voyages of the *John Jay*. The following invoice of her first cargo is important as showing not only the Indian demand but also something of the general trend of industry in Rhode Island. It is dated

“Providence, December 22, 1794.

“Shipped by Brown, Benson and Ives.

“Inv^o of Cargo on board the Ship *John Jay*, Daniel Olney Master, bound for Bombay (in the Hither Indies) thence to

Canton in China and consigned to Messrs. Daniel Olney and Samuel Snow for sale, on account of the Owners"—viz

Pig Iron—47 Tons.....	£566	5	5
Bar Iron—104 $\frac{1}{4}$ Tons.....	2606	5	
Cordage to the amt. of.....	1166	6	6
Rum—47 $\frac{1}{2}$ Hhds.....	103	11	
Holland Gin—1257 cases.....	1885	10	
34 Casks London Brown Stout Porter.. }	928	18	6
76 “ “ “ “ .. }			
Beef, pork, and other stores.....	876		
Abt. 15,000 ft. White Pine Boards.....	67		
Anchors and Anchor Stocks.....	278	18	6
Porter—2 kinds.....	118	2	6
Candles.....	279	17	3
Geneva.....	138	0	0
Tobacco.....	11	15	5
Russia Duck.....	144	0	0
Ravena do.....	119	0	0
10 Masts.....	90	Dolls.	
67 Spars.....	30	do.	
Tallow Candles.....	£30	4	8

This list includes the main items of the cargo, the total value of which is invoiced at £10365. Copies of the instructions given by the firm to the supercargoes also exist. They are told to have recourse to one Dady Nassereang, at Bombay, with whom the firm had previously transacted business. “For the Sale of goods at Bombay it has been customary to receive bills of Exchange on Canton, payable at 60 days date, on Interest at 12 or 15 Percent per annum. . . we think this the best plan for you to adopt, and obtain at Bombay the most advantageous Cotton freight that is in your power. In times of profound Peace the *John Jay* we think would make a freight of thirty thousand Dollars in Cotton from Bombay to Canton and as a very small proportion of European Ships will probably be at Bombay when you are there we flatter ourselves you will be able to secure a freight of at least sixty thousand Dollars. . . At Bombay you will make all the dispatch possible . . and when Ship is loaded proceed on to Canton. . . The Pig Iron you have on board the Ship will be sold in Canton and as she will not want any other balast, we think it best to have her

floored off with China, which must be well packed in Strong boxes. . .” Directions are then given for buying teas of various sorts and qualities. From twenty to thirty thousand dollars may be invested in nankeens and silks, on a credit of 18 or 20 months. “You must observe that as it is uncertain whether the present European War will be ended before your Return, it will by no means be prudent to take on board the Ship, on freight, any goods belonging to the Citizens or Subjects of any of the Belligerent European Powers.”

Then follows a memorandum of the china to floor the ship : “30 to 40 Dining Setts of common blue and white China. 5 Setts of rather better Quality. 10 boxes Coffee Cups and Saucers. 20 boxes Tea Setts. Some Pint and Quart Bowls. A few boxes of Nankeen blue Cups and Saucers. . . . You may invest about five hundred Dollars in an handsome assortment of Lacquered Ware, if very low.”

A letter from Canton on the 10th of January, 1796, announces that the ship’s business at that port was finally concluded, having been further delayed by an outbreak of small-pox among the crew. The supercargo continues : “We should however have waited a more effectual recovery of our Crew if it had not been for the opportunity of sailing in Company with five more Americans who had been waiting four days for us, and who also have all agreed to keep Company through the China Seas, and Straits of Banka and Sunday. Seas and Straits which have now become very dangerous on account of Pirates, and in passing which Single Vessels if not very well armed are frequently taken.”

If we add to these details the entry of the return cargo, we have a very complete account of the *John Jay’s* first trip to India. By far the greater part of the cargo brought home consisted of teas of various grades, amounting in all to over 560,000 lbs. Out of this, 543,000 lbs. was Bohea, one of the cheaper grades of black tea. The remainder of the cargo is interesting from its quality and variety, quite apart from its value. It consisted of :

13 boxes and 14 pieces of Silks.

5 pieces of Lutestrings.

2 Boxes of Umbrellas, and 46 single Umbrellas.

483 bales of Nankeens.

4 pieces blue do.

- 138 boxes, 8 rolls, and 1 basket of China.
- 2 China pitchers.
- 14 boxes lacquered ware.
- 610 Ostrich Feathers.
- 4 pieces Silk Handkerchiefs.
- 3 " Gauze, 4 pieces Lambskin.
- 1800 rattans and canes.
- 2 tubs of Sugar Candy.
- 4 " Preserved Fruits.
- 1 Box Sweetmeats.
- 3 boxes Fans.
- 1 bundle Window Screens.
- 1 bundle Mats.
- 1 Box containing 7 Tea Trays.
- 1 Back Gammon Board.
- 1 box Rhubarb. 1 box Opium.
- 4 bales Cassia. 2 tubs Quicksilver.

For an estimation of the value of this cargo we may turn to the custom-house manifest, wherein the value of those goods which paid *ad valorem* duty (of from 10 to 40 per cent.) is given as \$75,406.48. The bulk of the cargo was made up of tea, as we have seen, and tea paid specific duties according to its classified value; and although the amount of specific duties collected appears in the custom-house manifests, the valuations upon which these duties were made do not appear. Nevertheless, by using the prices quoted in the manifest of the *General Washington* seven years earlier, we have an approximate standard of comparison. Thus, by comparing the specific duties levied on tea in 1796 with the prices at which tea was valued in 1789, we can get an idea of the proportion which the duty bore to the value of the goods upon which it was collected, and this would seem to be about one-third—*i.e.*, $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. Adopting this as the best method of comparison available—although without claim to be considered as anything but a rough estimate—and applying it to the cargo of the *John Jay*, we arrive at the conclusion that the specific duties (which amounted to \$60,296.96) represented one-third the value of the tea; multiplying by three we have \$180,891, and adding to this the valuation of the other goods given above, we obtain a valuation for the whole cargo of \$256,297.

The *John Jay* cleared for her second voyage on April 9, 1797. A journal of this voyage is preserved. It is "Compiled by John Bowers [the supercargo] onb.^d S.^d Ship." Mr. Bowers describes her armament as follows: "She mounts Six-Sixes—Six-Fours—Four Swivels—and is furnished with Muskets, Pistols, Hangers, Cutlasses, Boarding Pikes, &c &c. . . . Navigated by 25 Seamen besides a Steward Cook and Boy Number of Souls onboard 36."

Then we find the invoice of her cargo: Lead bars and pigs to the amount of \$2637.62; anchors, \$415; candles (spermaceti), \$715; Geneva, \$900; sherry wine, \$240; Madeira, \$4915.

The *John Jay* seems to have returned to Providence in the March of 1799 by way of Russia, as on the 23d of that month this advertisement appears in the *Gazette*: "Just imported, in the ship *John Jay*, from Russia, and for Sale, by Brown and Ives, On liberal Terms, Best St Petersburg clean Hemp, Russia Duck, 1st and 2d Qualities Russia Bar-Iron."

In the May of that year (1799) she cleared for Batavia. According to the "Instructions to the Supercargoes," they were sent direct to Batavia "to procure a cargo of the best Java Coffee, the latest growth to be preferred with Sugar of the first quality sufficient to ballast the Ship and no more. poor Sugar will not answer to bring to this Country. . . . We put on board the Ship toward paying for her cargo six Kegs and two Boxes Dollars containing fifty-two thousand Dollars." It is further agreed that the captain (Olney) shall receive \$1500 on the completion of the voyage, and five tons privilege in the ship.

A communication from Batavia in October, 1799, reports the ship loaded with coffee and sugar, and ready to start for home. Returning, she reached Providence, March 22, 1800. The *John Jay* sailed on her fourth voyage to India, May 15, 1800, and returned in July, 1801, bringing a cargo from Canton valued at \$318,315.08. She sailed from Newport on her fifth voyage, October 5, 1801, carrying a cargo of Canton white sugar, tobacco, rice and nankeens to Amsterdam, at which port the supercargo was instructed to take out a cargo to the Indies for the Dutch East India Company on commission, since, at that particular juncture of military and commercial disputes, direct trade was forbidden. The instructions were successfully carried out, and the *John Jay* returned to Providence in March, 1804.

In November of the same year she cleared again for Batavia, returning in September of 1804 with a cargo of coffee and sugar. On this voyage she lost her supercargo, Daniel F. Tillinghast, at sea. On the 22d of September she sailed for Amsterdam, where she took on board a cargo for Sumatra and China, consisting of Swedish iron, brandy, gin, beef, pork, claret, white wine, burgundy, champagne, hock, Malaga wine, muscatel, pickles, Bologna sausages, smoked tongues, sweet oil, castile soap, and 83,000 Spanish milled dollars, the whole valued at \$170,000 in round numbers.

The next news of the *John Jay* is an interruption of the even tenor of her career. On her homeward voyage she was captured by the British sloop-of-war *Driver*, commanded by one Captain Simpson, January 6, 1806, and carried into Bermuda on the 12th of the same month. The supercargo, John Bowers, gives the following account of the matter :

“St George’s Harbor,

“Island of Bermuda,

“Messrs. Brown and Ives—

“January 13, 1806.

“Gentlemen,

“I embrace the earliest opportunity to give you the disagreeable information of the detention of your Ship *John Jay* by his Britannic Majesty’s Sloop of War *Driver*, Capt. R. Simpson, who fell in with us on Monday the 6th Instant, about 4 P.M. in Latitude 28;56 N. Longitude 68;43 West.

“Capt. Simpson proceeded immediately on boarding the *John Jay* to take possession of the Ship’s Log Books and all the Papers relating to the present Voyage, all which were readily given up, wishing to give him every reasonable satisfaction and information as to the Neutrality of the Property; this it seems was not sufficient for Capt. Simpson, who was of opinion that we had violated the Law of Nations by trading from the Mother Country of their Enemy to the Colonies, for which reason he had a right to send the Ship in for adjudication. . . . he then gave me to understand that the circumstance of the Ship’s going from Holland to Batavia was sufficient cause to condemn the Property how far he may be right in his conjectures I cannot say, but it does not appear to me that it would be just, to condemn Property so neutral as the *Jay* and Cargo are, on such Pretenses. . . . As I have not the Pleasure of being ac-

quainted with any Person here, I must only hope to be so fortunate as to procure the most able and respectable assistance that can be obtained. . . . Very respectfully Gentlemen,

Your Obed^t Serv^t

JOHN BOWERS."

On January 20 Mr. Bowers writes : "Ship and Cargo were Libelled on the 15th instant, and the Trial will be held in twenty days from that date, if it is a Court day, otherwise on the first Court day following— how soon it will come on, God only knows— I am informed the proceedings in all kinds of business here, are retarded under the most frivolous pretexts." His principals in Providence were, however, fully alive to the urgency of the case. We find them applying to the Providence Bank for a letter of credit for \$60,000.

"Feby 24, 1806.

"The Board of Directors of the Providence Bank,

"Gentlemen,

"Being about sending out Col^o Samuel Ward to Bermuda to attend to the Unfortunate and unjust detention of our Ship *John Jay* and her Cargo—and proposing to authorize him to [claim] the Ship and get her away with all convenient Dispatch, We are Preparing Letters of Credit and responsibility for specific Sums for him to carry out, and to be given from such respectable Authority, As to Enable him to Offer the most unquestionable Security to wait the Event of Bonds— We now have to propose that your President and Cashier furnish us a letter to Col. Ward for the sum of sixty thousand Dollars, to be used by him in Case of Need. You will make Security to the Bank for that Amount in a Deposit of Funded Stock to the full Value of said Credit, which Stocks you to hold until it may be ascertained whether the letter is used and until it may be returned to you. We presume the Security now offered will be to the Entire Satisfaction of said Directors and hope for your kind aid in our Unpleasant business.

"With regards and Esteem

"We are Yours "

[Signature torn out].

The sequel is here given :—

“ Providence Bank

“ Saml Ward Esq

“ February 24, 1806.

“ Sir,

“ As you are about embarking for Bermuda for the purpose of claiming the Ship *John Jay* and her valuable Cargo belonging as we verily believe entirely to Messrs. Brown and Ives of this place, Captured off Bermuda by a British Vessel of War and those Gentlemen being highly esteemed by this Institution as well as by the Inhabitants of this Town, we are desirous of giving our assistance and support in recovering this property, that it may come into their possession.

“ It is well known here that this House commenced business with a large Capital, which has unquestionably been increased by their Mercantile operations and that they have the ability to undertake distant enterprises of Magnitude with their own means— the particular object of this address is to furnish you with an undoubted Guarantee for the sum of sixty thousand Dollars to be given to such person or persons in Bermuda or elsewhere as may become sureties or Bondsmen, in case you should think it expedient to give Bonds for the Property and such a measure should be assented to by the Court of Vice Admiralty. . . . By Order of the Board of Directors of the Providence Bank hereto subjoined.”

This letter was reinforced by another document,—now among the Moses Brown Papers. It is a circular letter from Moses Brown, and reads as follows :

“ Providence 26th of 2 Mo__

1806.

“ To all whom it may concern

“ Whereas it appears the Ship *John Jay*, belonging to Brown and Ives, Merchants in this Town, has been carried into Bermuda by one of the King's Sloops of War, and detained there, and Col. Saml Ward as their Agent is about Sailing for that place in order to claim her in their behalf, and to Transact the Necessary Business respecting her ; in In Order to give them, and him, the Necessary Credate to Effect the Business he goes upon, I, Moses Brown, of the Town Aforesaid, hereby certify that I will be Responsible for the said Brown and Ives, for any Contract their said Agent may make in their Behalf, concerning

the said Ship, *John Jay*, while at Bermuda, for the amount of 10 000 Dollars.

“They, the said Brown and Ives, indorsing this Letter of Credit, and the same being signed by the said Samuel Ward as their Agent, in the Negotiation of the said Business, shall be binding against the said Brown and Ives, in whom, as well as their Agent, the said Samuel Ward, I have full confidence.

MOSES BROWN.”

This substantial proof of confidence on the part of Moses Brown was accompanied by a letter to an acquaintance, which is interesting quite as much from the light which it throws upon his own family history as for its bearing upon the detention of the *John Jay*.

“ Providence, 26th 2d Mo.

“ Esteemed friend,

1806.

“Not having particular knowledge of any other person in Bermuda will be my apology, next to the occasion, of addressing thee, on the subject of the Ship *John Jay*, belonging to the house Brown and Ives, Merchants of this Town, being carried into your Island by one of the King’s Sloops of War, of her being examined by two other Ships and dismissed as I am informed. I apprehend the ground of capture must have been Suspicion of her Cargo being Enemy’s Property. I conceive myself in some measure bound to Represent some facts relating to the Concern as briefly as I can, and to Solicit thy making such Use of them to those in any way concerned, in Bermuda, as thou may judge proper, in order for their Understanding the Truth and Right of the Case.

“My Eldest Brother Nicholas Brown with whom I was formerly connected and of the firm of Nicholas Brown and Company died June 1791 Leaving much the Largest Property that has been left by any of our Citizens who have died before him. Leaving only his Son Nicholas Brown Jun. and one Daughter. I was an Executor to his Will and Testament and of course possessed full knowledge of his Affairs. The Firm of his House was then Brown and Benson, including his Son. Ives, one of the Owners of the Ship, not long after my Brother died, Married his only Daughter, who being made equal in his Will with her Brother, Ives soon became a Partner in the House, then altered

to the firm of Brown, Benson and Ives. After some time, and a voyage of the same Ship, the *John Jay*, to India, Brown and Ives purchased out their partner, George Benson, and became the sole proprietors of the Stock in Trade and altered the firm to Brown and Ives, being then a House of Large property for our State, young, Enterprising and active they extended their Trade as their Capital Increased by a Series of Successful Industry and has become one of the most Oppulent and Respectable Mercantile Houses in the State Trading on their own Capital in such Manner as to have Manifested as much Integrity and Punctuality in Business as any in the State, or of my acquaintance in New England, which I have had an Opportunity of knowing, from my being one of the Directors of the Bank of Providence the first and Largest in the State, for more than ten years past, where they have transacted much Business.

“Brown and Ives have steadily owned Upwards of one hundred Shares in the said Bank, the Current Price of which has been 470 to 500 Dollars a Share, and Nicholas Brown having during that Period and up to the present time been also one of the Board of Directors, and his Partner, Thomas P. Ives, one of the Directors of the Providence Insurance Company, who do their Business at the said Bank. in that as well as other State Institutions they are Large Stockholders, as also in the Public Fund of the United States, and tho’ they have now several sail of Ships at Canton and on the Indian Sea, yet it is well understood here that no Merchants of their extensive trade among us do their Business upon their own property so generally as they do. We who are Intimate with them, and know their Business so well, that we are fully satisfied that no foreigner is concerned with them in their (Trade, and well assured that no Such is in any Manner concerned in) the Ship *John Jay* now at Bermuda. Under my experience of their Probity, and Knowledge of their Business, I can with Clearness recommend them and their Agent Colonel Ward, who goes out to Claim the Ship and Transact the Necessary Business Relating to her, to thy Attention and Civilities on this Occasion, believing should it fall in my Way to render thee or any of thy friends a Similar Service I should take Pleasure in doing it, and am respectfully thy friend—”

(copy)

John Bowers—writing on May 15, 1806—reports the ship and

cargo condemned by the Court of Vice Admiralty in Bermuda, upon the following points : the general course of trade in which the ship had been engaged ; the cargo imported last voyage not unloaded in the States was called a continuity ; “ the Attestation of Messrs. Crommelins [agents at Amsterdam] before the American Consul not deemed Sufficient Proof as to Property from Amsterdam. The clearance for Sumatra and China when bound to a port of the Belligerent was held as a false destination, the Iron, though flat Bars, considered as Contraband. . . . from the Sentence of this Court I have moved a Appeal to the Lords Commissioners of Appeals by whom I hope and trust the Property will be restored with *Costs* and *damages*. . . . I shall . . . send you . . . a Copy of the Condemnation by which you will see the Property is condemned as belonging to Subjects of the Batavian Republic.”

The appeal shows, by a customs certificate of the port of Providence (September 18, 1804), that the *John Jay* brought a cargo of peppers, coffee, and sugar from Batavia to Providence,—making that port on September 4, 1804. This cargo was not unloaded, but carried to Amsterdam, and there sold, and a cargo whose invoice is given above was shipped for the East Indies. The appeal was successful. A memorandum upon the file of the *John Jay's* papers states that an “appeal was entered from said decision and the Ship restored on Bail sailed the 19th of June and arrived at Providence 28 June, 1806. Ship and Cargo restored by High Court of Admiralty in London.” Among the papers is also her clearance from Bermuda, “having on Board the Whole of the Cargo from Batavia except the Captain and Crew Adventured and given up by the Judge of the Vice Admiralty Court,” bearing the date June 16, 1806.

Nor did her adventures end here. On the 14th of October the *John Jay* sailed again for the East, and her log-book records the history of this, her last voyage. A cargo of coffee was taken in at Batavia with good success, but, sad to say, the good ship struck on a coral-reef off Pigeon's Island, where she had gone for pepper. A high wind drove her further upon the rocks. All efforts to get her off were failures, and after pounding for about twenty-four hours she began to fill with water,—but so slowly that the greater part of the cargo, rigging, and stores were brought ashore. Much of the cargo was damaged by water, and a considerable part lost, through openings in the

bottom of the ship. Finally—five days after striking the reef—the *John Jay* went to pieces, on August 22, 1807, thus bringing her checkered career to a somewhat tragic close.

Only eighteen months earlier the Indiaman *Ann and Hope* (the property of the same firm) had been lost on Block Island, at the conclusion of a prosperous voyage. This vessel, the first *Ann and Hope* (for there was subsequently another Indiaman of the same name), was built in 1798, starting on her initial voyage on July 9th. She is duly mentioned in the *Gazette* as “the new and elegant coppered Ship *Ann and Hope*, of 550 tons. Captain Sam’l Snow, of this Town, who is appointed Consul for the United States at Canton, goes Supercargo of the Ship. She mounts 12 Nine-Pounders, and carries 60 Fine Fellows, by way of Role d’Equipage.”

Letters received from her in the May of 1799 dwelt proudly upon her excellent sailing qualities. She reached Canton in five months and one day, having stopped four days at New-Holland (Australia) in the course of a voyage which had a spice of the adventurous. The ship’s log gives scarcely a hint of anything unusual, but the ship’s surgeon was more communicative, and a letter in the *Gazette* of May 18, 1799, dated “Wampoa (China) Dec. 17, 1798,” enters into details. He says: “I wrote you last from Port Jackson in New-Holland and gave a circumstantial account of our voyage, till our arrival there. I will add, that after bearing several days off Port Jackson, and finding it in vain to contend with adverse winds and a strong current, we fell to leeward and ran into Botany Bay, ‘that southern realm and land of rogues,’ where we anchored Oct. 21. Next day Messrs. Snow, Page jun, Thompson and myself, went to Sidney, a British settlement about 9 miles distant, where we waited on Gov. Hunter, and were politely received. After tarrying 2 days, we returned to the ship, accompanied by some of the best characters of Sydney, who dined on board.” On the 25th, the *Ann and Hope* again put to sea, and after some digression the letter continues: “On the 30th Nov., at 4.30 P.M. we made the Id. of Tinian. . . . Next day, came to anchor in the road. . . . As we lay at anchor, we discover’d, by means of a glass, 2 flags flying on Lord Anson’s beach, and a man walking backw’d and forw’d, seemingly in great agitation. When the pinnace drew near the shore, he hailed her, and inquired what countrymen we were. Being told, he was quest’n’d in turn. He replied that he

was an unfortunate Lascar, cast away there in the brig *Bramin*, fr. Macao, Capt. Swain, formerly of Providence (R. I.) When the Capt. got on shore, the Lascar prostrated himself at his feet in the oriental manner. He informed us that he was the only human being on the island, and begged to be taken on board and deliver'd from death. The scene was affecting. Captain Page consoled him by assuring him that he should return in the ship to Macao, where he would find vessels bound for Bengal and be restored to his friends. He is about 25 years of age . . . and is a man of talents. He converses in English, French; Spanish, Portugese and Malay, besides his own language. He says, that the brig was originally commanded by Captain M'Clellan, an Irishman, who died at Leuconia; that the mate, whose name was Swain, succeeded to the command; that they arrived at Tinian about 18 months since, and preserving no order, the Captain being on shore, and the people on board intoxicated, she parted her cable in the monsoon at night, and struck on the reef, where she went to pieces. The people were all saved, except one, and part of the cargo was likewise preserved. The crew lived some months in huts, after which the whites were taken off by a vessel bound to the northwest coast. The Lascars, 9 or 10 in number, remained till the arrival of a Spanish vessel, when they were confined in irons, and all carried off except this unfortunate man, who escaped into the woods. When the Spaniards had sailed, he returned to the huts, but found them plundered of everything that had been saved from the wreck. Here he had spent his time in solitude and tears till our arrival. Tinian abounds with fruit, such as oranges, limes, guavaes, bread fruit, cherries, plumbs, beans, cocoa-nuts, tree cabbage, &c. cotton and indigo are also in great plenty; large white cattle are numerous, and hogs and fowls abundant. We saw the ruins of some pyramidal pillars mentioned by Lord Anson, but none of the pillars are standing. This beautiful island, even in its present uncultivated state, appears to be one of the finest and most desirable spots on earth. We remained there about 12 hours, got a supply of vegetables, and then took our departure. It is about 12 miles in length, 6 in breadth, and lies in lat. 15 N. long. 146 E."

On June 22, 1799, the arrival of the *Ann and Hope* in Providence is noted, 126 days from Canton; she reported that "on the 7th inst. at 3 in the morning, Lat. 30:42 N. long., 64:30 W.

Captain Page fell in with a privateer of 14 guns, full of men. She hailed from Bermuda, and shewed English colors, but was supposed to be French. After following the ship upon her course 15 hours, she fired 3 shot, which number was well returned, the *Ann and Hope* mounting 12 Nine-pounders. Finding Captain Page prepared to give her a warm reception, she hauled her wind and left him. During her voyage, the *Ann and Hope* has not met with a ship which outsailed her." The log-book of this first voyage exists, as kept by Christopher Bentley, mate, but it is so badly written and mis-spelled as to be almost illegible, and the entries are very scanty.

On the 10th of August, 1799, the *Ann and Hope* cleared for her second voyage to Canton, this time under Christopher Bentley as Master, a peculiarly well-timed change, so far as the purposes of the historical student are concerned, since the keeping of her log thereupon devolved upon one Amos Warner, who acquitted himself most creditably of the task. The ship reached Canton on January 22, 1800, having taken what was known as the Eastern route, around New-Holland, and made her passage in the exceptionally short time of five months. The *Gazette* of August 2, 1800, published another letter from the surgeon of the *Ann and Hope*, dated "January 26, Whampoa (Canton Bay)." After describing the voyage and praising enthusiastically the sailing qualities of the *Ann and Hope*, he says: "It is remarkable that the western coast of New-Holland should be vexed with almost perpetual storms—while the eastern, which is washed by the Pacific, enjoys a serene sky, a smooth sea, and a climate equal to the finest in Europe; so that after doubling the South Cape you seem as it were in another world.

"In avoiding all the Straits, and taking a route far east, agreeably to orders, we did not find so open a sea as we expected. On the 5th of December in lat. 19 S. long. 177:30 E. at daybreak, saw land on our starboard beam, bearing East, which surprised us, our chart laying down no land in this region.

"We coasted along 120 miles in a N. W. course, and saw, as we judged, more than 30 different islands. These I suppose must be the northwesternmost of the Friendly Isles, which were described to Captain Cook (when at Tongataboo and Anamoka) as lying about 500 miles in a N. W. direction. The natives call them Hamoa, Vavaoo and Feejee, and described the inhabitants

as being more ferocious than the other Friendly Islanders. Captain Cook did not proceed to explore these islands, and it is probable we are the first whites who have seen them.* They appear to be well cultivated and are laid out in regular plantations. . . . Certainly this part of the world has been but little explored. From lat. 19 S. to 10 N. we were entangled by land and shoals, and our chart having deceived us, we could place no reliance on it. The nights were excessively dark, and in some instances the course we steered must have precipitated us on the reefs or ashore ; but the Deity who regards the lives of the meanest of his creatures, tempered the winds contrary to our vain wishes."

According to the log, the *Ann and Hope* left Canton on March 13, 1800. The log for April 22 says : "At 2 P.M. we were abreast of the Dutch Fortress at Ballambonang River where the Governor, whose name is Clement de Harris resides in a decent 2 Story square handsome built Dutch house." On July 31st, a little skirmish with a privateer enlivened the monotony of the voyage. On August 16, the *Ann and Hope* arrived at Newport, where the cargo was discharged. No itemized account of the cargoes of these first two voyages has been found. Judging from the custom-house manifests the good ship brought home, in 1799, a cargo valued at \$314,987.50 ; in 1800, a cargo valued at \$324,388.60. On her third trip, the *Ann and Hope* went to London, and there shipped a cargo for Canton, of which the invoice has been preserved. It reads thus : "Invoice of sundry Merchandise Shipped by Thomas Thompson on board the American Ship *Ann and Hope*, Christopher Bently Master, bound for Canton in China and consigned Samuel Snow Esq. American Consul residing there, for account and risque of Messrs. Brown and Ives Merchants of Providence State of Rhode Island and Natives and Citizens of the United States of America.—Viz. 80 Bales containing 1600^{ps} [itemized as so many long ells, black, purple, blue, scarlet, &c.] amounting to £4220 ; Cloths, calicoes, etc., £14000 ; Cutlery [table knives and forks, carvers with guards, penknives, &c.] ; Ebony tables, white and green ivory tables, Tumblers, wine and water glasses, decanters, lamps ; Squares of picture glass ; Metal gilt watches, silver watches,

* In reality the Fiji Islands had been discovered by Abel Tasman long before, in 1643.

gold watches ; Pale ale, and Brown stout." The total amount of the cargo shipped at London was £20,187-12-7.

From the *Gazette* we learn that the *Ann and Hope* reached Canton, August 30, 1801, in four months and ten days from London—all well. That she came safely to Providence in due course of time we may assume from the fact that she cleared for Manilla in the May of 1802. In October of that year she left Batavia for Cowes, where she arrived the April following (1803). From there she sailed to Amsterdam, and thence to the Baltic ports, and reported from Cronstadt on May 31st. She cleared for Batavia, on her fourth voyage, November 12, 1803, and returning, reached Providence in August, 1804. On November 10 she cleared for the East Indies, via Lisbon ; she reached Batavia, May 2, 1805 ; and on the return voyage came to an inglorious end on Block Island. An account of the wreck is in the *Gazette* for January 18, 1806 : "With regret we announce that in the night of Friday, the 10th inst. the large and elegant ship *Ann and Hope*, Capt. Laing of this town, was lost on Block Id. and that but little of the cargo will be saved. She was from Batavia, last from the Isle of France, where she put in for repairs, and had on board a very valuable cargo."

Among other notable vessels was "*The President*," or the "*President Washington*," as she seems to have been indifferently called. She is described by the *Gazette* of January 8, 1791, as follows : "On Thursday Morning a most elegant coppered Ship, called *The President*, belonging to Messrs. Brown and Francis, was launched at the Ship-yard near Fox-Point. She is intended for the Indian trade, is 950 Tons Burthen, and allowed to be the best Ship ever built in New England. The weather proved uncommonly fine, and she moved majestically from the Ships, amidst the Plaudits of an immense Concourse of Spectators, among whom was a brilliant assemblage of the fair Daughters of America."

This vessel made but one voyage for her Providence owners: In the *Gazette* for September 14, 1793, we read : "A few Days past a Waggon with between 50 and 60,000 Dollars in Specie, was unloaded at the Bank in this Town, and the Money deposited in the Vaults—the Property of Messrs. Brown and Francis, Merchants, and Part of the Proceeds of the Ship *President Washington*, and her Cargo, sold at Calcutta in 1792. This sum being *more Specie* than they have ever shipped to the Indies, al-

though for Six years past considerably engaged in that Trade, it is expected will operate on the Minds of thinking People to do away with a Prejudice against the Trade, and convince them, that it is our Duty to encourage it, as being much more advantageous than for us to continue the Retailers of Indian Goods for European Merchants." That the *President* was purchased by some Dutch firm is probable, since the next (and last) news of her is an item stating that she sailed from Canton to Ostend, and there advertised for sale a cargo consisting of "911,700 lbs. Bengal sugar, 21,500 lbs. gum arabic, 121 bags coffee, 475 chests of tea, besides large Quantities of Piece Goods."—(*Gazette*, July 15, 1793.)

The "large and elegant ship, called *George Washington* (built by Messrs. Brown and Francis for the India Trade)," left Providence on her first voyage in January, 1794, via Madeira. She made a voyage to China and Batavia in 1796, and upon her return was purchased by the United States Government and fitted as a cruiser. The event is of course commented upon by the *Gazette*, wherein, under the heading "Wooden Walls of America," is retailed successively the appointment of her captain, the progress of her preparations in respect both of men and ammunition,—the former coming from Worcester, the latter from "the Foundry in Scituate" (14 nine-pounder cannon),—and the hope is expressed that the new frigate "may be successful in protecting and defending the Trade of the United States against piratical Depredators." The *George Washington* is also described in a government report of "Vessels purchased by the Public, now in service," for the year 1798,* as being of 624 tons, mounting 24 guns, and having a crew of 220 men. She was "purchased of John Brown, of Providence, Rhode Island, with masts, spars, sails, etc., nearly prepared to receive her guns and military stores, for \$10,400 cash." The subsequent career of the *George Washington* may be followed quite at length in the pages of the *Gazette*. For instance, under date of March 14, 1801: "The *George Washington* frigate, Capt. Bainbridge, arrived at Constantinople on the 23d of December, with tribute or presents from the Dey of Algiers, estimated to be worth 5 millions of piastres. 'This,' says a London paper of Jan. 18, is 'the first ship of war belonging to the United States that ever entered a

* Am. State Papers, Vol. XIV., pp. 58, 59.

Turkish harbor. The American Captain was under the immediate protection of the Algerine Ambassador, and was received in the most hospitable manner by Lord Elgin, the British Ambassador.' The *George Washington* was built at Providence," goes on the *Gazette*, "and was formerly an Indiaman from this port. A number of young men belonging to this town and state are on board of her."

For evidence as to the character of the imports brought to the United States from India we have the invoices which have been already quoted ; and a large amount of assorted information may be obtained from the contemporary newspaper advertisements, some of which are so quaint as to be interesting as well as useful. Among the earliest is one dated May 22, 1790. "A large *Vendue*.—On Tuesday, the 8th of June next, at 9 o'clock in the Morning, will be exposed to public Sale, at Hop-pin and Snow's Auction-Office, Near the Great Bridge, Providence, A large Quantity of India Goods, Just imported in the Ship *Warren*, Capt. Pardon Sheldon,* directly from Calcutta (the Capital of Bengal) consisting of as great a Variety as has ever been sold at any Vendue in New-England ; among which are—Printed Calicoes and Chintzes, of every Kind ; Muslins and Muslin Handkerchiefs, of all Sorts ; long Cloths of different Qualities ; and many other Cotton Cloths ; which from their Durability have been found very profitable for Family Use, either as Shirting or Sheeting.—

"Also, Bandano and Pulicat Silk Handkerchiefs, Persians, Taffetas, Gingham, Doreas, Bastas, East and West-Indian Cotton, excellent Saltpetre, a few Chests of best Bohea, Hyson and Souchong Teas ; Window-Glass, an Assortment of Manchester Cotton Goods, and many other *New Goods*, which would not be generally known by their names, therefore we have omitted the particulars ; all which will be sold in such Lots and Quantities

* The following is Capt. Sheldon's epitaph : "This monument is erected to the memory of Captain Pardon Sheldon, who departed this life on the 3d of February, 1838, aged 98 years, 3 mos. and 13 days.

"He was a native of Providence, and for 71 years an exemplary member of the First Baptist Church. In early life his predilections led him to look upon the ocean for his home. His intelligence, industry and perseverance soon obtained for him a high place in his profession and his courage and experience as a nautical commander, caused him to be selected to take charge of one of the first ships ever fitted from this country for the East Indies.

"For almost a century he enjoyed the confidence of his fellow citizens affording them in his well established character an illustration that to be useful was to be good, that to be virtuous was to be beloved ; that in life he could be respected, in death lamented."

as may best suit the Purchasers—to accommodate whom, if more agreeable, we would receive one-half of the Purchase Money in Loan-Office Certificates, or Final Settlements, at the highest going Price at the time of the Sale. Flattering ourselves that the great Variety and Richness of the Goods will be an Object sufficient to induce Gentlemen from other States to attend the Auction, we would just note, for their Information, that there is the greatest Probability that the Convention of this State, which meets at Newport next Week, will adopt the Constitution, whereby every Embarrassment which at present attends the Transportation of Goods from this to the neighboring States will be removed, so that the Purchasers will be enabled to convey their Goods to their respective Homes, free from any Impediment whatever. The Sale will be continued from Day to Day. Hoppin and Snow.”

Here is another, containing more detailed information : “Providence, June 1, 1793. Just imported, In the Ship *Rising Sun* direct from Canton, and for Sale, by Brown, Benson and Ives, Fresh Bohea Tea of the first Quality, in Chests, Half, and Quarter Chests, China, a great Variety, Sattins, Lutestrings, Persians, Taffetas, of different Qualities, black and other Colours, A Variety of fashionable Silks and Silk and Cotton, for Gentlemen’s Summer Wear, Nankeens, Elegant Sattin Shoe-Patterns, Pearl Buttons with Gold Figures, Superfine Lambskins, Ivory and lacquered Ware, Tea-Caddies, A large Assortment of lacquered Tea-Trays, Waiters, Bottle-stands, &c, &c. Silk Handkerchiefs, Hair Ribbons, Cinnamon and Cinnamon Buds, Black Pepper, 200 Boxes excellent Sugar, &c.”

On October 5, 1793, we find Brown and Francis offering for sale “A Variety of India Goods, imported this Season direct from Canton and Calcutta, viz. :” Then follows the usual list of teas, souchong, hyson and bohea, and then : “China Ware, a handsome and general Assortment, consisting of blue and white, and red and white and enamelled Tea and Coffee Cups, Tea and Table Setts, &c.” Among other items are mentioned “Canton and Cochin China white powdered Sugar—Oil Cloth and Silk Umbrellas, India Canes.”

In 1800 (October 18), an advertisement of a more specialised sort appears : “India Goods Store. Opened and ready for Sale at the Sign of the Padlock, the following articles, viz. : Silks—A Variety of Sattins, Lutestrings, Perlans, Pealings,

black and blue Stripes for Coats and Vests, Shawls, Handkerchiefs, sewing Silk, white Silk Fringe, and Ribbons, Cottons. Colored Nankeens for Children's Winter Wear, Cotton Lamb-skin, . . . India Cottons of various kinds. . . . Fans, Lacquered Ware, China Ware, Teas, India Sugar—by the Public's obedient Servant John Lippitt."

Again, on June 29, 1803, Benjamin Hoppin and Son advertise the entire cargo of the ship *Rolla*, Captain Arnold, from Calcutta, for sale at auction, consisting of "125 bales of well-chosen white cottons, 125 bales of fine and coarse chintz and seersucker, 3 boxes of bandanoes, 1 box of best double twilled ditto, 1 box of choppa romal ditto, 2 boxes of lungee ditto, 2 boxes of susteroi ditto, 80 bags of best white sugar, 40000 se-gars, and a variety of other goods."

A curious advertisement is in the *Gazette* for May 12, 1804. "Yam Shinqu, China-Ware Merchant, at Canton, Begs Leave respectfully to inform the American Merchants, Supercargoes and Captains, that he procures to be manufactured, in the best Manner, all sorts of China-Ware, with Arms, Cyphers, and other Decorations (if required) painted in a very superior Style, and on the most reasonable Terms. All Orders carefully and promptly attended to. Canton (China) Jan. 8, 1804."

Some idea of the increase in the volume of trade during these twenty years may be obtained from the statistics at the custom-house. First, as to the number of ships engaged in the trade: The *General Washington* cleared for the East Indies in 1787; in 1789, two ships cleared for India; in 1792, three ships went out; in 1799, four; in 1804, six. The largest number in any one year was seven, in 1806.

The *General Washington's* first cargo was valued at very nearly \$100,000 (\$99,848). In 1795, the volume of imports was \$311,910. In 1800, imports from the East Indies were valued at \$726,924. In 1804, the volume of imports was \$887,000; in 1806, \$662,000,—but in that year two of the largest Indiamen (*John Jay* and *Ann and Hope*) failed to make their expected haven in safety. This would more than account for the decrease in the volume of trade. The enormous profits made were more than compensation, in the long run, for the frequent interference with American commerce on the part of the European powers.

Nevertheless, there was good and sufficient reason for strengthening "the wooden walls of America," and at their best the

protection which they afforded to her merchants was very far from effective. Our relations with France were seriously strained under the Directory. American claims for captured vessels were persistently disregarded. During 1797 complaints of French privateers are particularly numerous in the newspapers, and in 1798 American vessels of war were authorized to attack French cruisers.

English acts of hostility were largely prompted by fear lest the American Indiamen should encroach upon England's monopoly of the carrying-trade. A clipping from the *Indian Apollo*, in December, 1796, alludes with much satisfaction to that article of the Jay treaty of 1795 which prohibited American ships trading to the East Indies from carrying their cargoes to Europe, since the greater part of the trade would thus be confined to English ships. In 1800, however, England began to assume rights of search for enemy's goods upon neutral ships.

Vessels were frequently taken into the West Indies and condemned upon some trifling pretext. One Captain Bowler having offered some remonstrance received this laconic reply from the Governor of New-Providence, whom the worthy captain describes as "a petty despot with his arms akimbo and a supercilious grimace, 'Sir, his Majesty's commanders never err.'" The experience of the *John Jay* is a typical instance of the risks from this source incurred. With the renewal of the war between England and France in 1803 came a fresh series of measures directed against the carrying trade, and extending over several years. American commerce was very nearly swept from the ocean, and after the war of 1812 was ended, the extraordinary stimulus which manufactures had received during the intervening two years, prevented commerce from again reaching that pre-eminent position in the industrial life of the New England States, which it had held before the outbreak of hostilities.

This account of the first twenty years of the East India trade brings us to the time of England's famous Orders in Council (of 1806 and 1807) and Napoleon's Decrees of Berlin and Milan, all of which were directly aimed at the carrying trade of neutrals. At that time the Americans were the great neutral carriers, a position which they ceased to occupy after the Embargo of 1807, or at any rate after 1815, when peace allowed the European nations to compete once more for the carrying-trade.

